

Country: NETHERLANDS
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Title: AIRCRAFT BUILDING INDUSTRY REVIVED
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Five years after the demise of major aircraft builder Fokker, a new Dutch aircraft is ready to fly. The new aircraft, the Eaglet, is a two-seater that can be used for flight school training, police corps activities and environmental inspections.

After years of discussion, finding financiers, conducting test flights and obtaining certificates, the youngest Dutch aircraft building company Euro-ENAER has covered almost all bases. After the Dutch aviation authority (Rijksluchtvaartdienst) gives its final approval, the production facility at the Den Helder airport will start building several Eaglet series a year.

The interest in the Eaglet is considerable. According to the company's director Michel van Tooren, "There is direct interest for 150 aircraft." The first three will go to a Dutch customer. The demand for this type of aircraft is increasing on a market with few suppliers; a market that used to be dominated by Cessna and Piper. The aim is to produce approximately 400 to 500 Eaglets at a speed of five to six aircraft per month over a time frame of three to four years.

Particularly the use of light composite materials like glass fiber strengthened synthetics will give the Eaglet an advantage over other aircraft. The Eaglet will cost 159,731 euros (approximately \$143,674), but is very economical in use. The first flights with the Eaglet were a success. The aircraft will be the first in its class to be certified in accordance with the new European rules (JAR 23), qualifying it for the American market.

The young eagle is not entirely Dutch. The original design belongs to the Chilean builder ENAER, which will produce the fuselage. Although prototypes had already been produced in Chile during the early nineties, the Dutch company had a decisive role in the design and in the building of the new Eaglet. In cooperation with the Technical University Delft and the Dutch Technical Research Institute (TNO), the Dutch now own the rights. The aircraft has come a long way from its prototype. The Eaglet now has a strong motor, different propellers, minimized chances of crashing and the TU Delft has given the cockpit's layout a new

design. Euro-ENAER has support from the investor Aerospace Business Group (ABG), belonging to Mr. Hein Langendijk, who will become a 51% shareholder. The Chilean ANAER will reduce their interest and become 21% shareholder. Both Tifan (a starter fund of universities and banks) and holding company Thresoor Bunschoten will own 10%.

There are also small shareholders like Jan van Toorn, former dealer of the American Piper aircraft, who basically started this whole project. After the crisis in the small aircraft industry in the early 1980s, which was also fatal to Piper, Van Toorn found a way to get the Eaglet concept to the Netherlands. After long procedures and with the support of the Dutch Institute for Aerospace Research (NIVR) and the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Euro-ENAER was established in 1997.

The company is also considering the production of a four-person amphibian airplane, which is used particularly in the U.S. and Canada for home to work travel. This "Brevity" aircraft must be aerodynamically efficient and economical in its use of energy. To keep its weight at a minimum, the aircraft will be composed of carbon fiber synthetics, which also prevent corrosion. A ducted-fan (a burning motor with a blade wheel) will be used for the drive. The motor will be hung in the fuselage. Above the fuselage there will be air admittance for the ducted-fan. The boat shaped plane will be equipped with a retractable landing gear for functionality on both land and water.

According to Van Tooren this project will start from the ground. Although all technical risks have been mapped out, success is not guaranteed. Fortunately there are investors, who will give it a shot. At the moment Van Tooren is rounding off the search for financiers to get the required 6.8 million euros (approximately \$6.1). If this succeeds, the Ministry of Economic Affairs will grant the company substantial development credit.

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International Trade Administration
The Commercial Service

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